

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 481 944

HE 036 368

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TITLE Critical Issue Bibliography (CRIB) Sheet: Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE).
INSTITUTION ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education, Washington, DC.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE 2003-00-00
NOTE 10p.
AVAILABLE FROM For full text: <http://www.eriche.org>.
PUB TYPE ERIC Publications (071) -- Reference Materials - Bibliographies (131)
EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Educational History; *Educational Improvement; Educational Innovation; *Federal Aid; *Higher Education
IDENTIFIERS *Fund for Improvement of Postsecondary Education

ABSTRACT

This Critical Issue Bibliography (CRIB) Sheet focuses on the history of the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) and current FIPSE projects and priorities. As background, the bibliography includes an account of the early history of FIPSE and a description of its current programs. The bibliography lists 6 Internet resources and 11 annotated print resources, all of which are available in the ERIC database. (SLD)

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Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE)

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Critical Issue Bibliography (CRIB) Sheet

Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE)

by Tamara Holub

Introduction

The Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) is a program of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Postsecondary Education. FIPSE was originally created in 1972 as an initiative within the now defunct Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to offer competitive grant awards to projects designed to improve postsecondary education. This critical issue bibliography discusses the history of FIPSE and current FIPSE projects and priorities.

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Early History

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, educators, higher education researchers, and policy makers began calling for changes to postsecondary education to meet needs created by increased college enrollments and an increasingly diverse student population (Smith et al., 2002). One of the most influential commissions calling for change was the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education whose 1968 report, *Quality and Equality*, argued in favor of a foundation for higher education. In 1972, Congress created FIPSE and awarded the program \$10 million to fund initiatives that promised innovative approaches to reforming higher education.

From 1973 to 1979, FIPSE awarded funds for 500 projects. A survey of early FIPSE staff and grant recipients identified several factors that marked the success of early FIPSE programs: a large number of small grants were awarded to diverse institutions, especially to individuals who were low in the institutional hierarchy and close to the learners; FIPSE responded to the needs of the field of higher education and avoided creating an agenda; FIPSE awards encouraged creativity, networking, and risk taking; and FIPSE's staff was small and comprised of young, dedicated professionals who acted as collaborators and program managers (Smith et al., 2002, pp. 6-7). Virginia B. Smith, the founding director of FIPSE, states that FIPSE carved out a unique identity in its early years by being broadly "inclusive about who could apply for funding and what qualifies as postsecondary education," by a commitment to reach underserved populations, and by encouraging applicants to pursue "any of the broad purposes described in the legislation itself" (Smith,

2002, p. 13).

Audrey Cohen College is one early FIPSE grant recipient with very successful project results. The college was started in 1966 to train low-income adults for employment in human services agencies. Audrey Cohen received a FIPSE grant to professionalize the program and tie the curriculum to professional competencies. (Smith, 2002, p. 14). Today, Audrey Cohen College, now called Metropolitan College of New York, is fully accredited, and offers associate's, bachelor's, and master's degrees in locations throughout New York City.

FIPSE Today

The main FIPSE programs are the Comprehensive Program and special focus competitions. The Comprehensive Program supports reform projects that can serve as national models for the improvement of postsecondary education. FIPSE defines postsecondary education broadly to include nonprofit agencies offering education after high school, colleges, universities, community colleges, technical and business schools, libraries, testing agencies, professional associations, employers and unions, state and local education agencies, student organizations, cultural institutions, community groups, and other organizations. It does not award grants to unaffiliated individuals.

The Comprehensive Program requires a two-part application and review process. For fiscal year 2003, FIPSE projects that it will award about 55 new awards with grants for up to three years. The grants range from \$150,000 to \$600,000 over the three-year period. FIPSE is looking for creative, untried solutions to significant system-wide problems in postsecondary education that would benefit learners. In addition to new ideas, FIPSE is seeking projects that have strong design, management, evaluation, and dissemination plans as well as potential for long-term sustainability and growth. FIPSE also values initiatives that rely on collaborative participation with professionals in the appropriate field. Funding priorities for 2003 include improving the preparation of K-12 teachers; promoting reform of curriculum and instruction; improving access to postsecondary education, and improving student retention and program completion.

Topics vary periodically for FIPSE's special focus competitions. For 2003, there are three international grant competitions: the European Community/United States (EC-US) Cooperation Program in Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training; the Program for North American Mobility in Higher Education; and the US-Brazil Education Consortia Program. The EC-US Program supports strengthening cultural ties between Europe and the United States and promotes improvements to human resource development in both countries. The program backs student-centered projects that encourage transatlantic cooperation in higher education, vocational education, and training. Funding is provided by FIPSE and the European Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture. The Program for North American Mobility in Higher Education is based on the principle of increasing cooperation in higher education, research, and training among the United States, Canada, and Mexico. The three respective countries run the program cooperatively, and each country has its own application guidelines. Funding is provided by FIPSE, Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), and the Dirección de Desarrollo Universitario, Secretaría de Educación Pública. The US-Brazil Program is run by the United States and

Brazil and promotes cross-national education and training for a variety of academic and professional disciplines. The program also cultivates student, faculty, and staff exchange programs to further bilateral curricular development.

Recipients of FIPSE Awards

Examples of recent projects awarded by FIPSE include: a virtual physics department at Texas A & M University; a national articulation and transfer network at the City College of San Francisco; a faculty training program to improve academic literacy of language minority students at California State University, Los Angeles; and an inter-collegiate approach to controlling costs through the colleges of the Central Pennsylvania Consortium. A database of FIPSE grants can be found online at: <http://www.fipse.acd.org>.

Funding for FIPSE

In the President's fiscal year 2004 budget request for the Department of Education, the requested amount for FIPSE is \$39.1 million for 2003, with the same amount requested for 2004. The 2004 request would fund 163 new and continuing projects under the Comprehensive Program, the international consortia programs, and 27 projects previously funded under the Demonstration Projects to Ensure Quality Higher Education for Students with Disabilities Program (<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OUS/Budget04/04summary/section2e.html#fipse>)

Current Priorities

The No Child Left Behind Act, passed on January 8, 2002, stipulates sweeping reforms to K-12 education. The NCLB Act charges that the federal government hold schools accountable for the success of its students. The basic education reform principles of the legislation are stronger accountability for results, increased flexibility and local control, expanded options for parents, and an emphasis on teaching methods that have been proven to work (<http://www.nclb.gov/next/overview/index.html>). The funding priorities for FIPSE grant competitions support the educational reforms stressed by the NCLB Act. These priorities, important in the past as well as today, include improving the preparation of K-12 teachers; promoting reform of curriculum and instruction; and improving access to postsecondary education as well as student retention and program completion.

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EJ 654 010

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ED 466 714

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U.S. Department of Education. (2002). *FIPSE: Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education. The Comprehensive Program: Fiscal Year 2003*. Washington, DC: Author. On the Web: <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OPE/FIPSE/Comp/index.html>

U.S. Department of Education. (2002). *FIPSE Program for North American Mobility in Higher Education*. Washington, DC: Author. <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OPE/FIPSE/northam/2003northamapp.pdf>

Further Reading:

For FIPSE application materials, project abstracts, a searchable database of projects from 1994-present, evaluation information, info about award-winning projects, etc.: <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OPE/FIPSE/index.html>

Lessons learned from FIPSE Projects

ED 364159

Marcus, D., & Others. (1993, September). *Lessons Learned from FIPSE Projects II*. Washington, DC: Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (ED). This monograph describes 30 college and university programs funded by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education from 1989 to 1991. Each description includes information on program purpose, project activities, major insights and lessons, project continuation, and available information. The first group of 10 are programs focused on assessment and include an assessment resource center, area concentration achievement testing with curricular evaluation, computers and college writing, assessment seminars, New Pathway Curriculum impact evaluation, liberal education model assessment, college-wide measures toward general education goals, comprehensive assessment in academic disciplines, and a regional assessment network. Another group of four programs address college teaching: professional development, medical scholars, and database and online service orientation. Nine projects address curriculum and teaching in the disciplines including laboratory education, undergraduate mathematics, economic curricula, scientific thinking, French language and culture, case study physics, music theory, biology instruction, and freshman chemistry. Two programs address general education. Three projects involve teacher education and two programs address ethics instruction. The following institutions are included: University of Tennessee; Austin Peay State University (Tennessee); City University of New York; Harvard University (Massachusetts); Miami University (Florida); State University of New York; Winthrop College (South Carolina); University of California;

Ohio State University; Salem State College (Massachusetts); Clemson University (South Carolina); Denison University (Ohio); Dickinson College (Pennsylvania); Tufts University (Massachusetts); University of Maryland; New Mexico State University; Northwestern University (Illinois); University of Oregon; University of Rhode Island; University of North Texas; Indiana University of Pennsylvania; Northern Virginia Community College; Union College (New York); University of Connecticut; and Saint Cloud State University (Minnesota).

ED 364158

Marcus, D., Ed. (1990, October). *Lessons Learned from FIPSE Projects: 15 Directors of Reform Projects in Postsecondary Education Draw Conclusions about What Worked, What Didn't, and Why*. Washington, DC: Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (ED).

This monograph describes what worked and what did not in 15 college and university programs sponsored by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education from 1984 to 1987. Each description includes information on the project's purpose, innovative features, evaluation, impact or changes from the grant activities, what worked unexpectedly, what did not work, available information, and what has happened to the program since the grant ended. The programs and colleges are: (1) Alverno College (Wisconsin): High/Middle School-College Teaching Partnerships; (2) Atlanta University (Georgia): Integrating Computerized Bibliographic Services into Historically Black Schools; (3) University of California-Los Angeles: A Value-Added Approach to Institutional Excellence; (4) Carnegie Mellon University (Pennsylvania): A Learner-Centered Computer Environment for Critical Reading, Reasoning, and Writing; (5) DePaul University (Illinois): Equal Educational Opportunity for Learning Disabled

College Students; (6) DePaul University: Master of Arts Program for Practicing Professionals; (7) Georgetown University (District of Columbia): Interdisciplinary Education for Advanced Technology and International Public Policy; (8) Long Island University (New York): The Hellman Academy for Mathematics and Science Teacher Education Retraining; (9) Madonna College (Michigan): Educational Access for Hispanic Youth; (10) University of Missouri-Columbia: Integrating Dispute Resolution into First Year Law School Curriculum; (11) University of Missouri-St. Louis: Gateway Writing Project-Composing, Computers and Contexts; (12) University of Oregon: Micro-computing Laboratory for Integrative Learning in Physiology; (13) Salisbury State College (Maryland): The Mathematical Competition in Modeling; (14) Southern Regional Education Board: Improving the Pass Rate of Minority Students on Teacher Certification Examinations; and (15) University of Virginia: Teacher Training through Computer Simulation.

ED 194005

American Association for Higher Education. (1980). Funding Quality Improvement: Lessons from the FIPSE Experience. Proliferation and Agency Effectiveness in Accreditation: An Institutional Bill of Rights. *Current Issues in Higher Education*, 2. Two papers, and a commentary for each, are presented. In "Funding Quality Improvement: Lessons from the FIPSE Experience," by Charles I. Bunting, the development, strategies, and evaluation of the federally funded Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) are described. It is noted that FIPSE's strategy for achieving learner-centered improvement assumes that the best and most appropriate creativity, analysis, programmatic wisdom, and ultimate responsibility are at the local level. Other possible applications of this strategy or its premises are explored. Commentaries are provided by Charles Bingman, Sol Pelavin, and Kenneth W. Tolo. "Proliferation and Agency

Effectiveness in Accreditation: An Institutional Bill of Rights," by H. R. Kells, discusses the increasingly acknowledged interaction of the institutions with the accrediting agencies as the institutions attempt to weigh the benefits of accreditation against the costs. Four recommendations are made regarding agency proliferation and duplication (reduction, coordination, and efficiency and control of visits and reports), and six recommendations are made concerning agency effectiveness (validation of standards, on-campus staff assistance, evaluation team activity improvement, appeal rights, and representation of the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation). An institutional bill of rights incorporating these ideas is provided. Commentaries are given by Robert L. Ketter, William H. Knisely, and Kenneth E. Young.

ED 403841

Marcus, D., & Others. (1996, August). *Lessons Learned from FIPSE Projects III*. Written in Collaboration with 31 Directors of College and University Reform Projects Who Tell What Worked, What Didn't, and Why. Washington, DC: Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (ED).

This volume is the third in a series of self-portraits of projects that receive funding from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE). The 31 essays in this volume are grouped around seven main themes: (1) school-to-college transition and retention; (2) rewarding effective teaching; (3) improving teaching and learning; (4) improving the undergraduate curriculum; (5) assessment; (6) teacher education, and (7) postgraduate curriculum and instruction. Institutions and organizations represented by these projects include: University of Michigan; Rollins College (Florida); Eastern Washington University; Anne Arundel Community College (Maryland); City University of New York-The City College; City University of New York-College of Staten Island; University of Nebraska at Lincoln; Rhode Island College; Mount Holyoke College (Massachusetts); Saint Anselm College (New Hampshire); University of Delaware; Washington State University; California State University at Northridge; Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine; The Community College of Aurora (Colorado); University of Minnesota; Kennesaw State College (Georgia); University of Oregon; University of Connecticut; Miami University (Ohio); University of Wisconsin at Madison; Mathematical Association of America; Baylor College of Medicine (Texas); University of California at Berkeley; The Center for Applied Linguistics (Virginia); New York Hall of Science; Pace University (New York); California School of Professional Psychology at Alameda; Georgetown University Law Center (District of Columbia).

ED 443300

Marcus, D., Cobb, E.B., & Shoenberg, R.E. (2000 May). *Lessons Learned from FIPSE Projects IV*. Washington, DC: Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (ED).

This volume summarizes projects funded by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, examining the various lessons learned. The 39 reports are organized in nine sections titled: (1) "Preface"; (2) "Access and Retention"; (3) Improving Teaching and Learning"; (4) "Curriculum and Instruction"; (5) "General Education"; (6) "International Education"; (7) "Teacher Education"; (8) "Performance Funding and Reporting in Colleges and Universities"; and (9) "Disseminating Proven Reforms." Each project report describes its purpose, innovative features, evaluation and project impact, lessons learned, project continuation and dissemination, and contacts for further information. Overall, most projects were deemed successful. Lessons gleaned from the projects include the fact that holding students to high standards works; passionate, creative teaching is crucial; difficulties will arise and can be surmounted; and

excellent work eventually brings recognition and reward.

FIPSE as a catalyst for change

EJ 654014

Coombs, N. (2002, September - October). FIPSE: Empowering Students with Disabilities. *Change*, 34, (5).

Describes how the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) has helped institutions reach out to groups they have historically neglected, including funding a project to formulate a global strategy for making computers accessible to disabled students. Includes a list of other projects.

EJ654013

Paulson, K. (2002, September - October). FIPSE: Thirty Years of Learning Anytime and Anywhere. *Change*, 34, (5).

Describes how, from its beginning, the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) has supported providing education to citizens everywhere, first by sponsoring face-to-face instruction in remote locations and now by encouraging institutions to use online technologies to reshape education by providing it anytime and anywhere.

EJ654012

Laws, P. W., Hastings, N.B. (2002, September - October). Reforming Science and Mathematics Teaching: FIPSE as a Catalyst for Change. *Change*, 34, (5).

Discusses how the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) has funded projects successfully influencing the way undergraduate science and mathematics are taught around the nation.

EJ 654011

Levison, S.P., Straumanis, J. (2002, September - October). FIPSE: Changing Medical Education Forever. *Change*, 34, (5).

Describes how the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) has played a central role in sponsoring innovations in the medical and health sciences, including landmark medical projects to integrate women's health issues into the medical curriculum and to use lay people in the teaching and evaluating of medical students.

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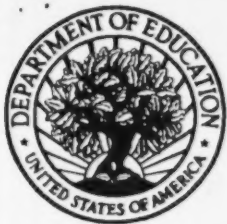


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